

CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR



KARYN POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
November 25, 2015

CONTACT
Elizabeth Guyton
elizabeth.guyton@state.ma.us



Governor Baker Invites Public to State House Christmas Tree Lighting and Holiday Open House

Open House Encourages Residents to "Make it a Massachusetts Holiday!"

BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito welcome members of the public and their families to attend the annual State House Christmas tree lighting ceremony and Holiday Open House on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 from 4:30 PM to 7:00 PM. The theme of the Open House, "Make it a Massachusetts Holiday!," will showcase Massachusetts farmers, food producers, agricultural partners and tourism venues. Guests will also be able to enjoy holiday carols and a special visit from Santa Claus.

"We look forward to welcoming everyone to the State House to get into the holiday spirit and learn about all Massachusetts has to offer this time of year," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "I encourage everyone to join us in lighting the State House Christmas tree and learning how to support Massachusetts-based producers and tourist sites this holiday season."

"Massachusetts has an array of locally-produced and hosted holiday products, tourism opportunities and family-friendly events," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "As we kick-off the holiday season, I hope everyone will join us in making this a true Massachusetts holiday."

"Make it a Massachusetts Holiday"

State House Christmas Tree Lighting and Open House
Tuesday, December 1, 2015

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Holiday Carols and Open House	Grand Staircase
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Tree Lighting Ceremony	Doric Hall
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Holiday Open House and Santa Claus	Great Hall

***** NOTE: All guests will enter through the security checkpoint at the State House's General Hooker entrance where bags will be searched. Attendees are encouraged to limit or avoid bags in order to limit entry wait times. Media wishing to cover the event should arrive at the media check-in location at Doric Hall inside the State House at 4:30 PM. *****

The Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund will also be on site encouraging guests to create holiday greeting cards for service men and women stationed abroad.

"We are encouraging residents to make this holiday season a Massachusetts holiday," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton.** "Our annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony and holiday open house will feature farms, food businesses and agricultural partners, a visit from Santa Claus, carolers and more, making the evening a special way to recognize their contributions to our local food system."

Massachusetts produces many agricultural and horticultural products typically enjoyed during the holiday season, including Christmas trees, poinsettias, maple products, wines and cheeses, cranberries, turkey, seasonal vegetables and wool items.

"The State House holiday celebration is a great venue for Massachusetts growers to showcase their products," **said Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) Commissioner John Lebeaux.** "Citizens and guests can celebrate a Massachusetts holiday and learn a little bit about our agriculture and food sectors: two industries that are vital to the Massachusetts economy."

"Massachusetts is a magical place during the holidays for residents and visitors alike," **said Nam Pham, Assistant Secretary of Business Development & Interim Director of Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism.** "Many of our historic sites and cultural centers are open throughout the season for families to enjoy a genuine Massachusetts holiday."

Massachusetts attracts 22.9 million domestic and 1.5 million overseas visitors each year, contributing \$18.5 billion in annual revenue.

According the 2012 Agricultural Census, Massachusetts' 7,755 farms help to protect over 523,000 acres of open space and produce more than \$492 million in agricultural products annually. At nearly \$48 million, direct market sales account for 10 percent of the state's total sales of agricultural products and Massachusetts ranks 5th in the nation for direct market sales and 3rd for direct market sales per operation.

Open House Participants:

Copper Kettle Bakery, Westwood
Ladybug Farm, Hubbardston
Curio Spice Co., Somerville
American Stonecraft, Lowell
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, Lowell
Ava's Caramel Popcorn, Arlington
Shaw Farm, Dracut
Stone Harvest Farm, Petersham
Koffee Kup Bakery, Springfield
Island Alpaca Co., Martha's Vineyard
Department of Agricultural Resources
Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau
The Cape Cod Central Railroad's Train to Christmastown, Hyannis
Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge
Freedom Trail Players, Boston
Old State House Museum, Boston
Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum, Boston

Musical Performers and Entertainment:

Boston Children's Chorus, Boston
Massachusetts Army National Guard Quintet
Boston Arts Academy Choir, Boston
Everett High Marching Band, Everett
Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School, Bridgewater
William Diamond Fife & Drum Band, Lexington

###